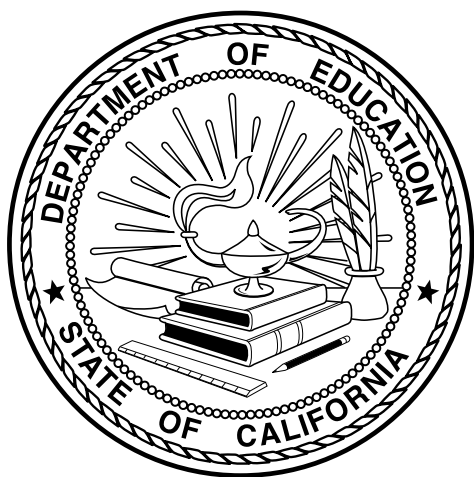


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# California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

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## **Annual Notification**

**Communicating to  
Parents and Guardians  
About the CAHSEE for the  
2008-09 School Year**

**July 2008**

Prepared by the  
**California Department  
of Education**

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## **Information for School District and School Staff**

- **Sample Notification Flyer**
- **Sample Letters**
- **Newsletter Inserts – Spotlight  
on the CAHSEE**

Available on the CDE CAHSEE Web page at:  
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>

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# Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to provide information for school districts and schools to use for notifying and informing parents, guardians, and students about the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE). All California public school students must satisfy the CAHSEE requirement, as well as all other state and local requirements, in order to receive their high school diploma. The CAHSEE requirement can be satisfied by passing the exam or, for students with disabilities, receiving a local waiver pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60851(c).

## School District Legal Requirements for Parent and Guardian Notification

At the beginning of the first semester or quarter of the regular school term, the governing board of each school district is required to notify the parent or guardian of each student regarding rights and responsibilities of the parent or guardian. (See *Education Code* Section 48980 for more information.) Beginning in grade nine, and each year thereafter, students and their parents or guardians must receive notification regarding the CAHSEE requirement through this annual notification process. (See *Education Code* Section 48980[e].) The notification must include, at a minimum:

- the dates on which the school district will offer the exam
- the requirements for passing the exam
- the consequences of not passing the exam
- that passing the exam is a condition of graduation

If a student transfers from another school district, notification must be given at the time of enrollment.

## 2008–09 CAHSEE Testing Dates and Guidelines

The following table contains the dates on which the CAHSEE may be offered by school districts during the 2008–09 school year, as set by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. School districts should select their test dates and insert them into the tables and sample materials that appear in this assistance packet. Microsoft Word versions of the sample materials are available on the California Department of Education (CDE) CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp> for school districts to customize.

### Designated CAHSEE Testing Dates for the 2008–09 School Year

English-Language Arts Tuesday	Mathematics Wednesday
July 29, 2008	July 30, 2008
October 7, 2008	October 8, 2008
November 4, 2008	November 5, 2008
December 6, 2008 (Saturday administration)	December 13, 2008 (Saturday administration)
February 3, 2009	February 4, 2009
March 17, 2009	March 18, 2009
May 12, 2009	May 13, 2009

**Grade Ten Students:** All students must take the CAHSEE for the first time in grade ten to meet state education and federal accountability requirements. School districts must offer the grade ten census administration in either February or March 2009. School districts may provide grade ten students who were absent during the census administration with one make-up opportunity in either March or May 2009.

**Grade Eleven Students:** The CAHSEE may be administered to grade eleven students up to two times per school year for the part(s) of the exam not previously passed. Although grade eleven students may test in successive administrations, it is recommended that school districts allow enough time between administrations to receive score reports and provide supplemental instruction.

**Grade Twelve and Adult Students:** The CAHSEE must be administered to grade twelve students at least three and up to five times and adult students up to three times per school year for the part(s) of the exam not previously passed. Although grade twelve and adult students may test in successive administrations, it is recommended that school districts allow enough time between administrations to receive score reports and provide supplemental instruction.

For further guidance on selecting test dates for the 2008–09 school year, please refer to the document *Guidelines for Scheduling CAHSEE Administrations for the 2008–09 School Year* located on the CDE CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/admin.asp>.

# Using This Assistance Packet

Notifying parents or guardians of the requirement that their child must pass the CAHSEE is an important part of ensuring student success on this exam. The more information a school district provides to parents and guardians, the greater the opportunity parents and guardians will have to participate in preparing their children for success on the exam. In addition, increased communication may help to better connect parents and guardians to the school district.

School districts are encouraged to use a variety of methods throughout the school year to inform parents and guardians of the CAHSEE requirement. To help with the notification process, this assistance packet includes the following resources:

- CAHSEE Questions and Answers
- CAHSEE Parent/Guardian Brochure
- Sample Notification Flyer
- Sample Reminder Letter(s)
- Sample School/Home Newsletter Inserts (*Spotlight on CAHSEE*)

These materials may be used as models for school districts to inform parents and guardians about the CAHSEE. After school districts select their CAHSEE administration dates (see previous section), the dates can be inserted into the sample documents along with local contact information. Microsoft Word versions of the sample documents in this packet are available on the CDE CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp> for school districts to customize.

## ■ Required Parent and Guardian Notification

To assist school districts in the annual CAHSEE notification process that is required beginning in grade nine, a sample notification flyer is included in this assistance packet. Once test dates are inserted into this flyer, it meets the minimum legal requirements for CAHSEE notification.

School districts may include more background information about the CAHSEE with this flyer, including the following documents that are located in this assistance packet: *Spotlight on CAHSEE*: “What is the CAHSEE?”, the “CAHSEE Parent/Guardian Brochure,” and the “CAHSEE Questions and Answers.”

**■ Additional Opportunities to Inform Parents and Guardians**

- Back-to-School Night

At Back-to-School Night, school personnel are encouraged to distribute the CAHSEE Parent/Guardian Brochure and other resources in this assistance packet to parents and guardians of students in grades nine through twelve. School personnel might also find it valuable to discuss the CAHSEE study guides and offer suggestions on how parents and guardians can use them with their children.

- Newsletter Inserts and Web Sites

The *Spotlight on CAHSEE* documents in this assistance packet may be inserted in school/home newsletters throughout the year to continue informing parents and guardians about the CAHSEE program. These inserts are translated and available on the CDE Web site in Microsoft Word format for schools and school districts to customize.

- School Letter Reminding Parents and Guardians When Testing Will Begin

Schools are encouraged to send a letter to parents and guardians four to six weeks before testing begins as a reminder that their child will soon be taking the CAHSEE. This assistance packet includes a sample letter that can be used for this purpose. (See sample letter, page 16.) This letter is translated and available on the CDE Web site in Microsoft Word format for schools and school districts to customize.

**■ Legal Requirement for Notifying Grade Twelve Students Who Have Not Passed the CAHSEE**

School districts are required under *Education Code* Section 37254 to notify students (or their legal guardians if the student is under the age of 18), who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE by the end of grade twelve of the availability of services and the right to file a uniform complaint if those services are not provided (*Education Code* Section 35186). This notification must be in writing to the student's or legal guardian's last known address and occur before the end of each school term in sufficient time for the pupils to avail themselves of the services each term for two consecutive academic years after grade twelve. This notice must also be posted in the school and district office and if applicable on the school district Web site. The letter must comply with the translation requirements of *Education Code* Section 48985.

A sample notification letter has been included in this packet for school districts to use to notify students of the 2008-09 test dates and to provide information on the options they have to receive additional instruction (see sample options letter, page 18). In this letter school districts may also include a list of additional instructional options the school district provides. These options may include programs and educational opportunities for students such as:

- Specific CAHSEE intervention for two years following the grade twelve year for students who have yet to pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE.
- Additional semester or year(s) of enrollment in a public comprehensive high school (for students who have been continuously enrolled) or in an alternative education program until the student passes the CAHSEE and obtains a diploma.
- Continuous enrollment in an independent study program of coursework relevant to receiving a high school diploma.
- Continuous enrollment in a charter school program until the CAHSEE is passed and a diploma awarded, through age 22.
- Enrollment in a charter school that provides instruction in partnership with: (1) the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998; (2) federally affiliated Youth Build programs; (3) federal job corps training or instruction; and (4) the California Conservation Corps or local conservation corps certified by the California Conservation Corps (*Education Code Section 47612.1*).
- Enrollment in a California adult school secondary education program to obtain a diploma by satisfying the district's graduation requirements and passing the CAHSEE.
- Enrollment in a community college program offering a high school diploma in conjunction with a high school district.

#### ■ Adult Student Notification

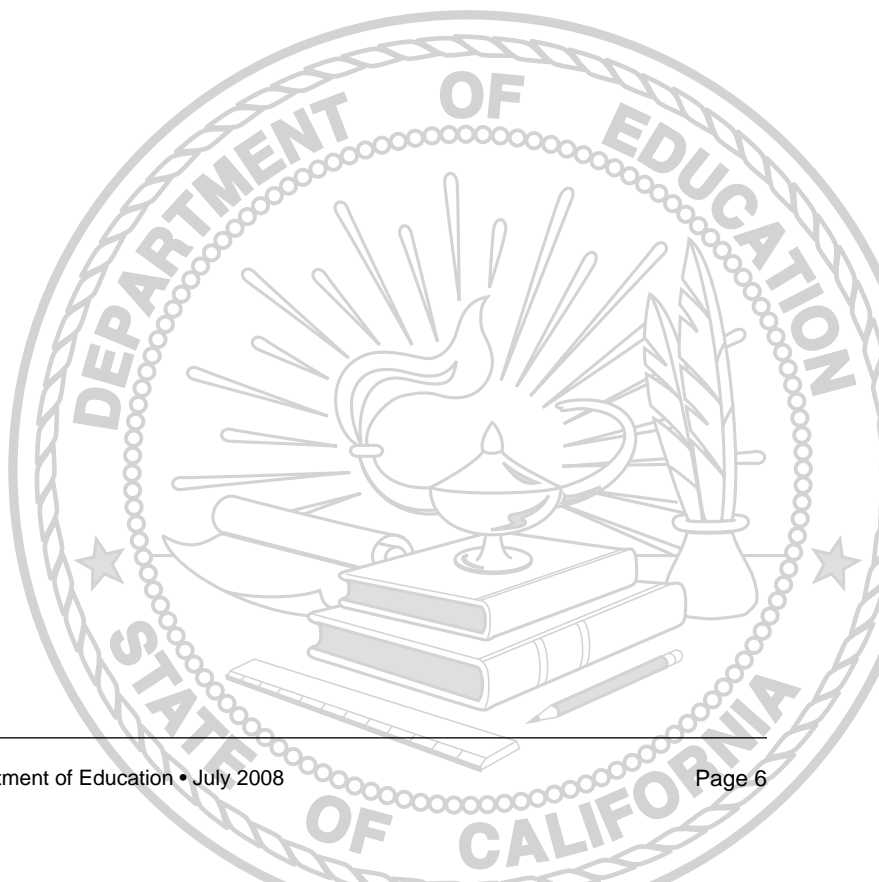
Adult students are required to pass the CAHSEE to receive a public high school diploma if they are enrolled in an adult school that is operated by a public school district. School districts should notify adult students of the CAHSEE requirement at the time they enroll in a high school diploma program. Notification should include, at a minimum, the dates on which the school district will offer the exam, the requirements for passing the exam, and the consequences of not passing the exam. It should also inform students that passing the exam is a condition of graduation.

# CAHSEE Overview Resources

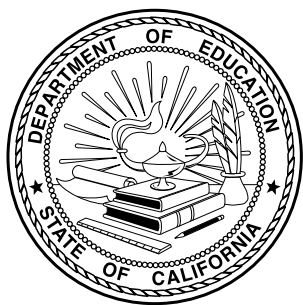
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**CAHSEE Questions and Answers**

**Parent and Guardian Brochure**







# California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

## Questions and Answers

### What is the CAHSEE?

State law, enacted in 1999, authorized the development of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), which students in California public schools would have to pass to earn a high school diploma. All California public school students must satisfy the CAHSEE requirement, as well as all other state and local requirements, in order to receive a high school diploma. The CAHSEE requirement can be satisfied by passing the exam or, for students with disabilities, receiving a local waiver pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60851(c).

The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and to help ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate grade-level competency in reading, writing, and mathematics.

### What subjects does the CAHSEE Cover?

The CAHSEE consists of two parts: English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Test questions address California content standards that a High School Exit Examination Standards Panel, appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, determined students should know to graduate from high school.

#### *English-Language Arts*

The ELA part of the exam, which addresses state ELA content standards through grade ten, has a reading section and a writing section. The reading section covers vocabulary, informational reading, and literary reading. This section includes approximately 50 percent literary texts and 50 percent informational texts. The writing section covers writing strategies, applications, and conventions. The ELA part of the exam consists of 79 multiple-choice questions (seven of which are field test items and are not scored) as well as a writing task (essay) in which students are asked to respond to a specific topic or a literary or informational passage.

**Are there any waivers of the requirement to pass the CAHSEE?**

*Mathematics*

The mathematics part of the CAHSEE addresses state mathematics content standards in grades six and seven and the first part of Algebra. It includes statistics, data analysis and probability, number sense, measurement and geometry, algebra and functions, mathematical reasoning, and Algebra I. Students must demonstrate computational skills and a foundation in arithmetic, including working with decimals, fractions, and percentages. The math part of the exam is composed of 92 multiple-choice questions (twelve of which are field test items and are not scored).

The CAHSEE blueprints provide more information on the content of the exam and are available on the California Department of Education (CDE) CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>.

In order to pass the CAHSEE, a scale score of 350 or higher is required on each part. Students do not need to pass both parts of the CAHSEE during the same administration in order to satisfy the CAHSEE requirement.

For certain students with disabilities, a waiver of the CAHSEE requirement may be available.

*Education Code* Section 60851(c) permits local school boards to grant a waiver of the CAHSEE requirement to students with disabilities who take the CAHSEE using modifications and receive the equivalent of a passing score.

At the request of the student's parent or guardian, a school principal must submit to the local school governing board a request for a waiver of the requirement to pass the part(s) of the CAHSEE on which a modification was used and the equivalent of a passing score was earned. For the local board to waive the CAHSEE requirement, the principal must certify that the student has met the following conditions:

1. An individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan is in place that requires the accommodations or modifications to be provided to the student when taking the CAHSEE.
2. The student has either satisfactorily completed or is in progress towards completing high school level curriculum sufficient to have attained the skills and knowledge otherwise needed to pass the CAHSEE.

**What is done to assist students with disabilities when taking the CAHSEE?**

3. The student has an individual score report showing that the student has received the equivalent of a passing score on the CAHSEE while using a modification.

CAHSEE regulations specify accommodations and modifications that students with disabilities must be permitted to use if specified in the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan for use on the CAHSEE, standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessments. An accommodation is a change in the testing environment or process that does not alter what the CAHSEE measures or affect the comparability of scores, whereas a modification is a change that fundamentally alters what the CAHSEE measures or affects the comparability of scores.

Students who use an accommodation and earn a score of 350 or higher have passed that part of the CAHSEE. Students who use a modification and earn the equivalent of a passing score on one or both parts of the CAHSEE have not passed but may be eligible for a waiver of the CAHSEE requirement (as described above).

**What is done to assist English learners when taking the CAHSEE?**

English learners must be permitted to take the CAHSEE with certain test variations if used regularly in the classroom. For example, if regularly used in the classroom, English learners must be permitted to hear the test directions in their primary language or use a translation glossary.

Students who are English learners are required to take the CAHSEE in grade ten with all other grade ten students. During their first 24 months in a California school, English learners are to receive six months of instruction in reading, writing, and comprehension in English (*Education Code* Section 60852). During this time, they are still required to take the CAHSEE.

**When do parents and guardians receive their student's CAHSEE results?**

About seven weeks after each administration of the exam, school districts receive two copies of the CAHSEE Student and Parent Report for each student who took the examination. When school districts receive these reports, they are to immediately distribute one copy to parents and guardians and place the other copy in the student's permanent record.

**Do parents and guardians need to keep a copy of their student's results?**

Yes. It is important that parents and guardians keep a copy of the student score report for their own records. The CDE does not keep a copy of individual student score reports. Individual student scores are

<p><b>How many opportunities do students have to pass the CAHSEE?</b></p> <p><b>What happens if students do not pass the CAHSEE?</b></p> <p><b>Is the CAHSEE used for school and school district accountability purposes?</b></p> <p><b>How can parents and guardians get their questions answered about the CAHSEE?</b></p>	<p>to be maintained by the student's school district. The school district must ensure the records are maintained confidentially. (<i>Education Code</i> Section 49073 and <i>Title 20 United States Code</i> Section 1232[g].)</p> <p>All students are required to take the CAHSEE for the first time in grade ten. Students who do not pass one or both parts of the exam in grade ten have up to two opportunities in grade eleven and at least three and up to five opportunities in grade twelve to retake the part(s) of the exam not yet passed. The CAHSEE testing schedule for the 2008–09 school year is posted on the CDE CAHSEE Web page at <a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/admin.asp">http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/admin.asp</a>. School districts select their testing dates from this schedule.</p> <p>School districts are required to provide additional instruction to assist students who do not pass the exam. Students, including English learners, who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE by the end of grade twelve, are entitled to receive intensive instruction and services for up to two consecutive academic years after completion of grade twelve or until they pass both parts of the CAHSEE, whichever comes first. Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact their child's school for information on the programs offered.</p> <p>Yes. The state and federal governments use the CAHSEE as a measure of school and school district accountability. The state accountability program is the Public Schools Accountability Act, and the federal accountability program is the No Child Left Behind Act. The use of CAHSEE results for these accountability programs in no way affects how the CAHSEE is used for individual student accountability.</p> <p>Additional CAHSEE information is available on the CDE CAHSEE Web page at <a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/">http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/</a>. Parents and guardians should direct their questions to their child's teachers or contact the school principal or counselor.</p>
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## How can parents and guardians help their child prepare for the CAHSEE?

The best academic preparation for the CAHSEE is good instruction. Parents and guardians should talk with their child's teachers or principal to learn more about the state academic content standards in English-language arts and mathematics being taught at their child's school. Parents and guardians whose child needs extra instruction to pass the CAHSEE should make sure he or she takes advantage of additional learning opportunities provided by the school.

The California Department of Education has posted released CAHSEE test questions and CAHSEE study guides on its Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>.

## What is done to assist students with disabilities when taking the CAHSEE?

The CAHSEE regulations specify accommodations and modifications that students with disabilities must be permitted to use if specified in the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan for use on the CAHSEE, standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessments. An accommodation is a change in the testing environment or process that does not alter what the CAHSEE measures or affect the comparability of scores, whereas a modification is a change that fundamentally alters what the CAHSEE measures or affects the comparability of scores.

Students who use an accommodation and earn a score of 350 or higher have passed that part of the CAHSEE. Students who use a modification and earn the equivalent of a passing score on one or both parts of the CAHSEE have not passed but may be eligible for a waiver of the CAHSEE requirement (see *Education Code* Section 60851[c]).

## What is done to assist English learners when taking the CAHSEE?

English learners must be permitted to take the CAHSEE with certain test variations if used regularly in the classroom. For example, if regularly used in the classroom, students must be permitted to hear the test directions in their primary language or use a translation glossary.

Students who are English learners are required to take the CAHSEE in grade ten with all other grade ten students. During their first 24 months in a California school, English learners are to receive six months of instruction in reading, writing, and comprehension in English (*Education Code* Section 60852). During this time, they are still required to take the CAHSEE.

## For More Information

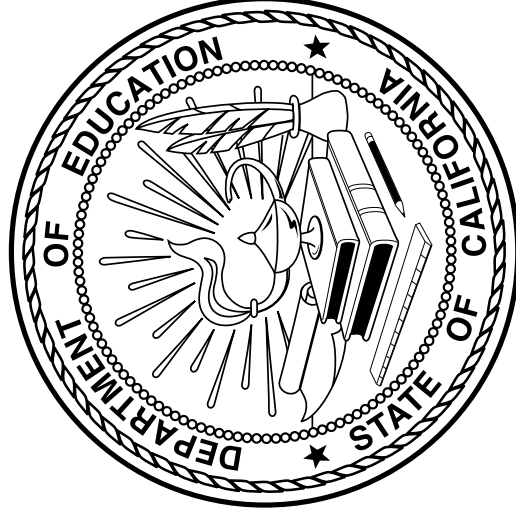
Visit the CDE Web site at  
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/>

or

Contact your child's teachers, principal,  
or counselor.

# California High School Exit Examination

*Information for  
Parents and Guardians*



California Department of Education

**July 2008**

# Questions and Answers for Parents and Guardians

## What is the CAHSEE?

State law, enacted in 1999, authorized the development of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), which students have to pass in order to earn a high school diploma.

All California public school students must satisfy the CAHSEE requirement, as well as all other state and local requirements, in order to receive a high school diploma. The CAHSEE requirement can be satisfied by passing the exam or, for students with disabilities, receiving a local waiver pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60851(c).

The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and help ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate grade-level competency in reading, writing, and mathematics.

## What subjects does the CAHSEE cover?

The CAHSEE consists of two parts: English-language arts and mathematics. One part of the CAHSEE addresses state English-language arts content standards through grade ten, including reading and writing.

The reading section covers:

- Vocabulary
- Informational reading
- Literary reading

The writing section covers:

- Writing strategies
- Writing applications
- Writing conventions

The other part of the CAHSEE addresses state mathematics content standards in grades six and seven and Algebra I, including the following:

- Statistics, data analysis, and probability
- Number sense
- Measurement and geometry
- Algebra and functions
- Mathematical reasoning
- Algebra I

Students must demonstrate computational skills and a foundation in arithmetic, including working with decimals, fractions, and percentages.

## What kinds of questions are on the CAHSEE?

The English-language arts (ELA) part of the CAHSEE consists of multiple-choice questions and a writing task (essay). The mathematics part consists of all multiple-choice questions. Exam questions are given only in English.

## When is the CAHSEE administered?

The CAHSEE is administered at the school site during regular school hours on the dates chosen by your school district. The ELA part is administered on the first day of testing and the mathematics part on the second day of testing.

All students must take the CAHSEE for the first time in grade ten.

A scale score of 350 or higher is required on each part of the CAHSEE to pass.

Students do not need to pass both

parts of the CAHSEE during the same

administration in order to satisfy the

CAHSEE requirement. Students who

do not pass one or both parts of the

CAHSEE in grade ten will have additional

opportunities in grade eleven and in grade

twelve, if needed. Students who have not

passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE

by the end of grade twelve are eligible to

receive intensive instruction and services

for up to two years following grade twelve

in order to pass the CAHSEE.

## When do parents and guardians receive their child's results?

About seven weeks after each CAHSEE

administration, school districts will receive

two copies of the CAHSEE Student and

Parent Report for each student who took

the exam. The school district will distribute

one copy to the student's parents or

guardians and place the other copy in the

student's permanent record.

## Does passing the CAHSEE guarantee that a student will receive a high school diploma?

No. Passing the CAHSEE is just one requirement for graduating from high school. Students also must meet all other state and local requirements to receive a diploma

# **CAHSEE Parent and Guardian Information Resources**

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**Sample Notification Flyer**

**Sample Reminder Letter**

**Sample Student Letter Regarding Educational Options for  
Seniors Who Have Not Passed the CAHSEE**

**Sample School/Home Newsletter Inserts  
(Spotlight on CAHSEE)**

- **What is the CAHSEE?**
- **What Kinds of Questions are on the CAHSEE?**
- **What If My Child Does Not Pass the CAHSEE?**
- **What is Done to Help Students Who Need Assistance When Taking the CAHSEE?**

# SAMPLE NOTIFICATION FLYER

Once test dates are inserted into this flyer, it meets the minimum legal requirements for CAHSEE notification.

## California High School Exit Examination 2008–09

### Notice to Parents, Guardians, and Students

All California public school students are required by state law to satisfy the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) requirement, as well as all other state and local graduation requirements, in order to receive a high school diploma. The CAHSEE requirement can be satisfied by passing the exam or, for students with disabilities, receiving a local waiver pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60851(c)4. All students, including English learners and students with disabilities, must take the CAHSEE for the first time in grade ten. Students who do not pass the exam in tenth grade will have additional opportunities in grades eleven and twelve to retake the part(s) not passed.

### Subjects Covered on the CAHSEE

The exam consists of two parts: (1) English-language arts (reading and writing) and (2) mathematics. All questions are aligned to California content standards adopted by the State Board of Education. Content standards describe what students should know and be able to do at each grade level from kindergarten through grade twelve. Your school district can provide you with information on the content standards assessed by the CAHSEE, or you can download the CAHSEE test blueprints located on the California Department of Education (CDE) CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>.

### Requirements for Passing the CAHSEE

Students must earn a score of 350 or higher on each part of the CAHSEE (English-language arts and mathematics) to pass the exam. Students do not need to pass both parts of the exam during the same administration in order to satisfy the CAHSEE requirement.

### Accommodations and Modifications for Students with Disabilities

The CAHSEE regulations specify accommodations and modifications that students with disabilities must be permitted to use if specified in the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan for use on the CAHSEE, standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessments. Students who use an accommodation and earn a score of 350 or higher have passed that part of the CAHSEE. Students who use a modification and earn the equivalent of a passing score on one or both parts of the CAHSEE have not passed but may be eligible for a waiver of the CAHSEE requirement. Parents or guardians must ask the school principal to submit a waiver on behalf of their student. More information on accommodations, modifications, and the waiver process can be found on the CDE CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/accomod.asp>.



## Test Variations for English Learners

English learners must be permitted to take the CAHSEE with certain test variations if used regularly in the classroom. For example, if regularly used in the classroom, English learners must be permitted to hear the test directions in their primary language or use a translation glossary.

Students who are English learners are required to take the CAHSEE in grade ten with all other grade ten students. During their first 24 months in a California school, English learners are to receive six months of instruction in reading, writing, and comprehension in English (*Education Code* Section 60852). During this time, they are still required to take the CAHSEE. All students must pass the CAHSEE in English to receive their high school diploma.

## Graduation Requirements

All California public school students must satisfy the CAHSEE requirement, in addition to meeting all other state and local graduation requirements, to receive their high school diploma. Students with disabilities and English learners must also satisfy the CAHSEE requirement.

## Testing Dates

The CAHSEE will be administered at the school site during regular school hours on the dates specified in the chart below. Students in grade ten must take the CAHSEE during the **(insert February or March here)** 2009 administration. For grade ten students who are absent, a make-up administration will be offered in **(insert March or May here)**. Grade eleven and twelve students who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE will be offered the exam on the dates listed in the chart below.

2008-09  
Designated CAHSEE Testing Dates\*

English-Language Arts	Mathematics	
Tuesday	Wednesday	Administered To
(Insert date)	(Insert date)	(Insert grade[s] tested)

## For More Information...

For the latest information regarding the CAHSEE, please visit the California Department of Education CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/>. If you have any further questions about the CAHSEE, please contact our school office at **(insert phone number)**.

- *If your school district will offer the December 2008 CAHSEE administration, please specify that the administration will be held on two consecutive Saturdays. (See CAHSEE Testing Dates on page 2.)*

# Sample Reminder Letter

School districts are encouraged to send this letter to parents and guardians four to six weeks before testing begins as a reminder that their child will be taking the CAHSEE.

**(Insert date)**

Dear Parent or Guardian:

This letter is being sent to remind you that your child, along with other students in public high schools throughout the state, will participate in the upcoming administration of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE). Our school will administer the exam to your child on **(insert test date here)** at the school site during regular school hours. It is important that your child be present on test days.

The primary purpose of the CAHSEE, which is mandated by state law, is to ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate grade-level competency in the state's academic content standards for reading, writing, and mathematics. Your child must satisfy the CAHSEE requirement, as well as meet all other state and local requirements, to earn a high school diploma.

The CAHSEE consists of two parts: (1) English-language arts, which includes reading and writing, and (2) mathematics. All questions on the exam are aligned to California content standards adopted by the State Board of Education. Content standards describe what students should know and be able to do at each grade level from kindergarten through grade twelve.

Our school district will receive individual student results about seven weeks after the exam is given. Your child's results will be sent to your home as soon as they are available. Students who do not pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE during this administration will have additional opportunities to retake the part(s) not yet passed.

All grade ten students must take the CAHSEE, including English learners and students with disabilities. English learners must be permitted to take the CAHSEE with certain test variations if used regularly in the classroom. The CAHSEE regulations specify accommodations and modifications that students with disabilities must be permitted to use if specified in the student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan for use on the CAHSEE, standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessments. Students who use a modification and have earned the equivalent of a passing score may be eligible for a diploma if a waiver of the requirement to pass one or both

parts of the CAHSEE is granted. At the request of a parent or guardian, the local school board may waive the requirement to pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE if the student has met the requirements listed in California *Education Code* Section 60851(c).

For further information about the CAHSEE and your child's participation, contact our school office during regular school hours at **(insert phone number here)**. CAHSEE information also is available on the California Department of Education's CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/>.

# Sample Student Letter Regarding Educational Options For Seniors Who Have Not Passed the CAHSEE

*Education Code* Section 37254 requires that the local educational agency notify pupils (or their parent or legal guardian if the pupil is under the age of 18), who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE by the end of grade twelve of the availability of services and the right to file an uniform complaint regarding those services per *Education Code* Section 35186. This notification must be in writing to the last known address and occur before the end of each school term in sufficient time for the pupils to avail themselves of services each term for two consecutive academic years after grade twelve. The letter must comply with the translation requirements of *Education Code* Section 48985.

(Insert date)

Dear (insert name of student, parent, or guardian):

Our records indicate that you (your child) did not pass both parts of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) by the end of grade twelve. I want to encourage you (your child) to continue to pursue your (his or her) California high school diploma. Your school and school district want to provide you (your child) the support you (he or she) need(s) in these efforts. Therefore, I am writing to offer you (your child) the opportunity to receive additional instruction and assistance towards passing the CAHSEE and receiving a California high school diploma. Pursuant to California *Education Code* Section 37254, I am notifying you that:

1. Students, including English learners, who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE by the end of grade twelve are entitled to receive intensive instruction and services for up to two consecutive academic years after completion of grade twelve or until they pass both parts of the CAHSEE, whichever comes first;
2. English learners, who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE by the end of grade twelve, are entitled to receive services to improve English proficiency as needed to pass those parts of the CAHSEE not yet passed for up to two consecutive academic years after completion of grade twelve or until they pass both parts of the CAHSEE, whichever comes first; and
3. Students, who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE by the end of grade twelve, have the right to file a complaint regarding intensive instruction and services under the Uniform Complaint Process if they were not provided the opportunity to receive intensive instruction and services for up to two consecutive academic years after completion of grade twelve or until they pass both parts of the CAHSEE, whichever comes first.

The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and to help ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate competency in the California content standards for English-language arts and mathematics. Students who did not pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE by the end of grade twelve are encouraged to contact the district to receive intensive instruction and services in order to pass the CAHSEE. You (Your child) are (is) eligible to receive services by contacting your district office.

In addition to receiving services for two years, you (your child) may take the CAHSEE up to three times a year until you (he or she) pass(es) it, no matter how many times that takes. You will see listed below the dates that the CAHSEE is being offered at your high school and/or in your school district this year. Also provided is a contact person you should call for more information. I encourage you (your child) to keep taking the exam until you (he or she) pass(es). Furthermore, please note the additional educational options listed below that are available to you (your child) through our school district to help you (him or her) continue to prepare for the CAHSEE and pursue your (his or her) diploma.

Dates on which the test is being offered at your high school and/or in your school district this year:

<b>English-Language Arts Tuesday*</b>	<b>Mathematics Wednesday*</b>
(insert test date)	(insert test date)

To find out how you (your child) may participate in the next CAHSEE administration, please contact **(insert contact name)**, at **(insert contact number)**.

Educational options available through our school district include:

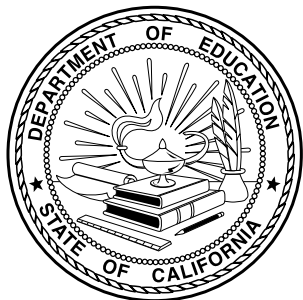
Options	Contact Name	Contact Number
(Insert educational options offered by your school district.)**	(insert contact name)	(insert contact number)

If you have any questions about the services available or wish to obtain services, please contact **(insert contact name)** at your district office. Our staff will be working with parents, guardians, and students to ensure that each eligible student receives services designed to assist the student in passing the CAHSEE. Please take advantage of these options; we are here to help you (your child) succeed.

If you have any questions regarding the California High School Exit Examination, please contact **(insert contact name)**, at **(insert contact number)**.

\* *If your school district will offer the December 2008 CAHSEE administration, please specify that the administration will be held on two consecutive Saturdays. (See page 2.)*

\*\* *See page 5 for possible educational options.*



# Spotlight on CAHSEE

## What is the CAHSEE?

State law, enacted in 1999, authorized the development of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), which students in California public schools have to pass to earn a high school diploma. All California public school students must satisfy the CAHSEE requirement, as well as all other state and local requirements, in order to receive a high school diploma. The CAHSEE requirement can be satisfied by passing the exam or, for students with disabilities, receiving a local waiver pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60851(c).

The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate competency in the state content standards for reading, writing, and mathematics.

### Exam Overview

The CAHSEE consists of two parts: English-language arts and mathematics. All questions are aligned to California content standards adopted by the State Board of Education. Content standards describe what students should know and be able to do at each grade level from kindergarten through grade twelve. More information about the content standards covered on the CAHSEE can be found in the CAHSEE Blueprints located on the California Department of Education (CDE) CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>.

School districts will receive results approximately seven weeks after the exam and students must earn a score of 350 or higher on each part of the CAHSEE (English-language arts and mathematics) in order to pass. This translates to approximately 60 percent correct in English-language arts and 55 percent correct in mathematics. Students who do not pass the exam in grade ten will have additional opportunities in grades eleven and twelve to retake the part(s) not passed.

### 2008–09 CAHSEE Testing Dates

The CAHSEE testing dates at our school for the 2008–09 school year are as follows:

- **Grade Ten Students**

Our school will administer the CAHSEE to all grade ten students during the **(insert February or March here)** 2009 administration. For grade ten students who are absent, a make-up administration will be offered in (insert March or May here).

- **Grade Eleven Students**

Grade eleven students who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE can take the CAHSEE in (insert test date here) and will have an additional opportunity, if needed, in **(insert test date here)**.

- **Grade Twelve Students**

Grade twelve students who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE may take the CAHSEE in **(insert test date here)** and will have additional opportunities, if needed, in **(insert additional fall and spring opportunities here)**.

- **Adult Students**

Adult students who have not passed one or both parts of the CAHSEE may take the CAHSEE in **(insert test date here)** and will have additional opportunities, if needed, in **(insert additional fall and spring opportunities here)**.

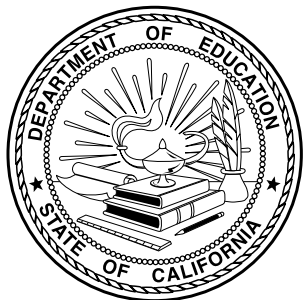
We will continue to keep students, parents, and guardians informed about this important exam. Additional information about the CAHSEE is posted on the CDE CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs>. If you have any questions about the CAHSEE, please contact our school office at **(insert telephone number)**.

2008-09  
Designated CAHSEE Testing Dates

English-Language Arts	Mathematics	
Tuesday	Wednesday	Administered To
(Insert date)	(Insert date)	(Insert grade[s] tested)

This is the first in a series of articles about the CAHSEE that will appear in our school newsletter. The next Spotlight on CAHSEE will address “What Kinds of Questions are on the CAHSEE?”





# Spotlight on CAHSEE

## What kinds of questions are on the CAHSEE?

The California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) is a graduation requirement for all public school students. The exam consists of two parts: English-language arts and mathematics.

### English-Language Arts

The English-language arts part of the CAHSEE tests California content standards through grade ten. The reading section includes vocabulary, decoding, comprehension, and analysis of informational and literary texts. This section includes approximately 50 percent literary texts and 50 percent informational texts. The writing section covers writing strategies, applications, and the conventions for standard English (e.g., grammar, spelling, and punctuation). The CAHSEE English-language arts portion includes 79 multiple-choice questions (seven of which are field test items and are not scored) and one writing task (essay).

The reading and decoding section covers:

- Word analysis, fluency, and systematic vocabulary development
- Reading comprehension
- Literary response and analysis

The writing section covers:

- Writing strategies
- Writing applications
- Written and oral English language conventions

### Mathematics

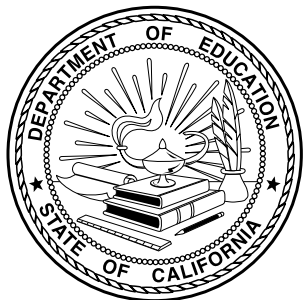
The Mathematics part of the CAHSEE tests California content standards in grades six and seven and Algebra I. The exam includes statistics, data analysis and probability, number sense, measurement and geometry, mathematical reasoning, and algebra. Students must demonstrate computational skills and a foundation in arithmetic, including working with decimals, fractions, and percentages.

The CAHSEE mathematics portion includes 92 multiple-choice questions (12 of which are field test items and are not scored) that cover:

- Statistics, data analysis, and probability
- Number sense
- Measurement and geometry
- Algebra and functions
- Mathematical reasoning
- Algebra I

More information about the number and types of questions covered on the CAHSEE can be found by downloading the CAHSEE Blueprints and Released Test Questions from the California Department of Education CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/>.

This is the second in a series of articles about the CAHSEE that will appear in our school newsletter. The next Spotlight on CAHSEE will address "What If My Child Does Not Pass the CAHSEE?"



# Spotlight on CAHSEE

## What if My Child Does Not Pass the CAHSEE?

The California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) is a graduation requirement for all public school students. The exam is administered to all students for the first time in grade ten in order to allow students adequate time for preparation and multiple opportunities to pass the exam before they graduate.

### Additional Opportunities

Students who do not pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE in grade ten will have additional opportunities to take the

part(s) they have not previously passed. Once a student has passed one part of the CAHSEE, he or she will not have to retake that part. Grade eleven students may take the CAHSEE up to two times per school year for the part(s) of the exam not previously passed and grade twelve students may take the CAHSEE at least three times but not more than five times during the 2008–09 school year:

2008–09  
Designated CAHSEE Testing Dates

English-Language Arts	Mathematics	
Tuesday	Wednesday	Administered To
(Insert date)	(Insert date)	(Insert grade[s] tested)

If your child did not pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE, the school will automatically register your child to take the next administration of the CAHSEE until he or she has passed both parts. It is important that your child attends school on test days.

## Supplemental Instruction

Our school district is committed to helping your child satisfy the CAHSEE requirement. Our English-language arts and mathematics classes are aligned with state content standards. In addition to regular classroom instruction, our school district also offers the following supplemental instruction to help students meet the CAHSEE requirement for up to two years following the grade twelve year for students who have yet to pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE:

### (Add or remove items as they apply to your school or school district.)

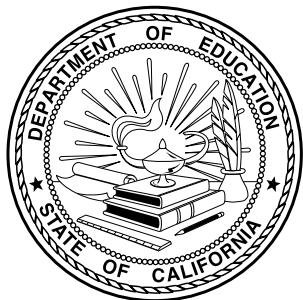
- *Elective Replacement*  
Students can choose to take an English or mathematics course to prepare for the CAHSEE during regular school hours in place of one of their elective courses.
- *After-School Tutoring*  
After-school tutoring is offered for students who would like one-on-one or small group instruction in English or mathematics to prepare for the CAHSEE.

- *Summer School*

Our school district offers English and mathematics summer school classes for students who want additional instruction in these areas.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to meet with their child's teacher or school counselor to determine what supplemental instruction is best for their child. For more information about supplemental instruction opportunities, contact our school office at **(insert phone number)**.

This is the third in a series of articles about the CAHSEE that will appear in our school newsletter over the next few months. The next Spotlight on CAHSEE will address "What is Done to Help Students Who Need Assistance When Taking the CAHSEE?"



# Spotlight on CAHSEE

## What is Done to Help Students Who Need Assistance When Taking the CAHSEE?

All California public school students must satisfy the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) requirement, as well as all other state and local graduation requirements, in order to receive their high school diploma. The CAHSEE requirement can be satisfied by passing the exam or, for students with disabilities, receiving a local waiver pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60851(c).

The *California Code of Regulations, Title 5*, (CAHSEE Regulations) describe test variations for the following groups of students taking the CAHSEE: all students, students eligible according to their individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan, English learners, and students with disabilities. The CAHSEE regulations are posted on the California Department of Education (CDE) CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/admin.asp>.

### Test Variations for All Students

Extra time within the testing day, marking in the test booklet, and receiving simplified or clarified directions are test variations for the CAHSEE that may be provided to all students.

### Test Variations for Eligible Students

Examples of test variations only available to students who regularly use them in the classroom include special or adaptive

furniture, special lighting or acoustics, or being tested individually in a separate room.

### Test Variations for English Learners

English learners must be permitted to take the CAHSEE with certain test variations if used regularly in the classroom. For example, if regularly used in the classroom, English learners must be permitted to hear the test directions in their primary language or use a translation glossary.

Students who are English learners are required to take the CAHSEE in grade ten with all other grade ten students. During their first 24 months in a California school, English learners are to receive six months of instruction in reading, writing, and comprehension in English (*Education Code* Section 60852). During this time, they are still required to take the CAHSEE.

### Accommodations for Students With Disabilities

An accommodation is a change in the testing environment or process that does not alter what the CAHSEE measures or affect the comparability of scores. Examples of accommodations for the CAHSEE include using a Braille transcription, having the mathematics part of the test read to the student or having it orally presented on a CD, and having extra time beyond the school day to complete the exam.

The CAHSEE regulations specify accommodations that students with disabilities must be permitted to use if specified in the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan for use on the CAHSEE, standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessments.

Students who use an accommodation and earn a score of 350 or higher have passed that part of the exam.

### **Modifications for Students With Disabilities**

A modification is a change in the testing environment that fundamentally alters what the CAHSEE measures or affects the comparability of scores. Examples of modifications for the CAHSEE include using a calculator on the math part of the exam, having the English-language arts part of the exam read to the student or having it orally presented on a CD, or using Manually Coded English or American Sign Language to present the test questions to the student.

CAHSEE regulations specify modifications that students with disabilities must be permitted to use if specified in the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan for use on the CAHSEE, standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessments.

Students who use a modification and earn the equivalent of a passing score on one or both parts of the CAHSEE have not passed the exam but may be eligible for a waiver of the CAHSEE requirement by the local school board. A student's parent or guardian must ask the school principal to submit a waiver on behalf of their child.

More information on test variations, accommodations, modifications, and the waiver process can be found on the CDE CAHSEE Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/accommod.asp> or by contacting your local high school or school district.

# Resources Available on the Internet

These Web page addresses are available for school and school district personnel to use to gain additional information and resources to provide to parents, guardians, and students about the CAHSEE.

**Academic Performance Index (API)**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/index.asp>

**Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP)**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ay/index.asp>

**California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/index.asp>

**Content Standards**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>

**CAHSEE Blueprints**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>

**CAHSEE Frequently Asked Questions**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/faq.asp>

**CAHSEE Released Test Questions**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>

**CAHSEE Study Guides**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>

**CAHSEE Teacher Guides**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/resources.asp>

**Accommodations and Modifications**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/accmod.asp>

***Matrix 1. Matrix of Test Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications for Administration of California Statewide Assessments (October 2007) (for all statewide assessments except for the CMA)***

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/>

**Matrix 2. Matrix of Test Variations for Administration of California Statewide Assessments for English Learners (October 2007) (for all statewide assessments except for the CMA)**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/>

**Adult Education Questions and Answers**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/adultqanda.asp>

**CAHSEE Scoring Process for the English-Language Arts Writing Tasks**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/scoringprocess.asp>

**CAHSEE Internet Summary Reports**

<http://cahsee.cde.ca.gov/reports.asp>

**DataQuest Parents Reference Page**

<http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/DQP.htm>

**CAHSEE Program Notes and Legal Updates**

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/updates.asp>